



**Sustainable Blue
Economy Partnership**

**Liaising actions towards international
organizations**

Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership

Milestone [146]



Co-funded by
the European Union

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1.0 FOREWORD

This milestone is a part of the series of reports contributing to chart progress on the international liaising activities the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership. As it also presents concrete results on the community-building at global level, it overlaps in content with the Brussels Office deliverable (D6.5), which is due shortly. Consequently, the following text largely mirrors that deliverable, with only minor amendments.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Joining forces to address the many challenges stemming from the ocean's multidimensional and interconnected role¹ is key for a sustainable blue planet. Strengthened with the launch of the Ocean Pact² at the UN Ocean Conference 2025 in Nice, European ocean diplomacy fosters multilateral engagement, collaborative action and enhanced knowledge for the blue transformation.

In support of the European leadership role on ocean governance, the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership leverages international cooperation and innovative solutions to boost blue economy development. By enhancing its community of practice on the global seascape, the Partnership promotes mutual learning for the evidence-based management of coasts, seas and ocean, facilitates the identification of pathways towards internationalization and enables synergies for impact-oriented action on shared priorities.

Following the methodology initiated by the Brussels Office, the Partnership engages with relevant international initiatives and organizations with a fit-for-purpose approach³. Therefore, beyond continued prioritization^{4,5} towards the Ocean Decade and the IOC/UNESCO, the G7 Future of the Seas and Ocean and the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development, the Partnership also actively mobilized the community at the third UN Ocean Conference in Nice.

¹ [Setting the course for a sustainable blue planet- update of the Joint Communication on International Ocean Governance](#)

² [EUR-Lex - 52025DC0281 - EN - EUR-Lex](#)

³ SBEP Milestone 61 „First information note on exchange of praxis across basins and globally according to the progress of the liaising activities”, 2023

⁴ SBEP Milestone 62 „Second information note on exchange of praxis across basins and globally according to the progress of the liaising activities”, April 2024;

⁵ SBEP Deliverable 6.3 „Compilation note on international institutions”, June 2024

3.0 UN OCEAN CONFERENCE 2025

With a high-level record participation, the third UN Ocean Conference in Nice (UNOC 3) marked an important milestone for global ocean action with the “Nice Ocean Action Plan”^{6,7} and the *“recognition that protecting the ocean is not only an environmental issue, but also a political, economic, financial, and social imperative”*.

3.1 Mobilization in Nice

Participation at UNOC 3 contributed to build the community at global level. The coordinator represented the Partnership in a panel discussion at an onsite event in the blue zone. The Partnership also organized an event at the One Ocean Science Congress which took place ahead of UNOC 3. Besides, a number of partners represented the Partnership at multiple events and side-events, thus fostering synergies, increasing visibility for the partners’ priorities, and feeding into the Partnership’s activities.

3.2 Participation at the Blue Economy and Finance Forum

Based on a selective application process, the Partnership was invited to join the Blue Economy and Finance Forum⁸ in Monaco (7th and 8th June 2025) under the UNOC framework. With a clear focus on unlocking blue finance for a regenerative ocean economy, creating a resilient and thriving ocean ecosystem that benefits present and future generations, this exclusive event brought together 2,000 stakeholders from the private sector, governments and society around the world, showcased global key actors at the highest level, with dozens of Heads of States, bankers, insurers, philanthropists, multilateral banks, intergovernmental organizations, as well as a range of initiatives and innovative financial models.

As informed at the Partnership’s Steering Committee meeting in Paris (June 2025), main takeaways for the strategic co-design were on the achievement of a “regenerative” blue economy which is nature-positive, the urgency to derisk and enhance resilience against climate change through ocean-based solutions, and the need to develop innovative financial models across the public and the private sectors based on sound ocean metrics and marine ecosystem accounting.

⁶ [A CONF.230 2025 16 \(ISSUED\).pdf](#)

⁷ [Nice Conference Adopts Declaration Underscoring Vital Importance of Ocean to Life on Our Planet, Essential Role in Mitigating Climate Change | UN Meetings Coverage and Press Releases](#)

⁸ [Blue Economy & Finance Forum, Grimaldi Forum, Monaco, 7th > 8th June 2025 - beff2025monaco.org](#)



3.3 Partnership's event on RV Meteor

At the third UN Ocean Conference in Nice, the Partnership convened international partners aboard the German Research Vessel METEOR for a high-level reception entitled “Networking and Knowledge Voyage”. Besides highlighting the role of the Partnership under the European Ocean Pact, this successful event promoted impactful knowledge across sectors and borders for the achievement of a sustainable blue economy for people and planet.

The programme featured statements from Peter Grönwoldt (German Federal Ministry for Research, Technology and Space), Manuela Krakau (German Federal Ministry for Environment, Climate and Nuclear Safety), Charlina Vitcheva (European Commission, DG MARE), Elisabetta Balzi (European Commission, DG RTD), Alison Clausen (IOC/UNESCO) and Margherita Cappelletto (Coordinator, Italian Ministry of Universities and Research). By bringing together a broad array of more than fifty key strategic partners for activities at international level, and by featuring the Partnership’s processes with an attractive format and engaging „Ocean Quiz Challenge“⁹, this event effectively contributed to build the community at global level towards impact. Finally, this event also promoted the critical role of research vessels for science-based ocean management.



⁹ [All aboard for UNOC: the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership convenes international partners in Nice | Bluepartnership](#)

4.0 COLLABORATIVE ACTION WITH THE OCEAN DECADE AND THE IOC/UNESCO

4.1 Co-branding of the Second Call and endorsement of co-funded projects as Decade Actions

As the largest coordinated global ocean science initiative, the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) or so-called Ocean Decade¹⁰, offers various collaborative opportunities across sectors, disciplines, sea basins and generations. Therefore, endorsement of the Partnership's co-funded projects by the Ocean Decade is key to achieve impact and to support global efforts for a sustainable ocean. Joint efforts between the Partnership and the IOC/UNESCO secretariat initiated under the first cycle of the Partnership have led to the co-branding of the Second Joint Transnational Call "Unified Paths to a Climate-Neutral, Sustainable, and Resilient Blue Economy: Engaging Civil Society, Academia, Policy, and Industry" with a double added-value: the automatic endorsement as Decade Actions of the projects selected for co-funding, as well as the strategic alignment of research and innovation priorities at European and international level through the co-design of the call text with the IOC/UNESCO.

In parallel, joint efforts between the Partnership and the IOC/UNESCO secretariat have led to the endorsement of most co-funded projects under the First Joint Transnational Call¹¹ through a special application procedure minimizing the administrative burden for the project coordinators, while entitling them to the same benefits as the projects directly endorsed under the co-branded Joint Transnational Calls.



Joint efforts were emphasized by representation of the Ocean Decade through the IOC/UNESCO Secretariat at the Steering Committee meeting in Paris to inform about the Vision 2030 Process¹².

It is worth mentioning that these achievements also demonstrate the collaborative approach of the Partnership since a broad range of partners have mobilized across the different

¹⁰ [Ocean Decade](#)

¹¹ [Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership's Projects Now Endorsed as UN Ocean Decade Actions - Ocean Decade](#)

¹² [Vision 2030](#)

task teams of the Executive Committee to enable the co-branding and to adapt it accordingly to the specific needs of the Partnership.

With additional outreach through the Ocean Decade's public relations channels with a website (291k users across 43 countries), social media (115k followers), newsletter (17k followers), and public campaigns such as GenOcean with opportunities for youth collaboration, the projects endorsed as Decade Actions benefit from enhanced visibility at global level. Co-branding also maximizes the Partnership's impact since Decade Actions are entitled to dedicated capacity-building, communication support and mentoring tools ranging from public speaking coaching to networking support. Last but not least, endorsement by the Ocean Decade offers funding opportunities. For instance, the Ocean Matcher Platform¹³ features Decade Actions on an online platform and elevates ocean funding through smart matchmaking with philanthropies.

4.2 Joint Work Programme of the Ocean Decade Programme on Sustainable Ocean Planning

Following the launch¹⁴ of the Ocean Decade Programme on Sustainable Ocean Planning at the Ocean Decade conference in Barcelona, the Partnership joined its Interim Advisory Committee. As lead organisation on the long-term objective „Cross-sectoral and cross-border cooperation“, and together with a range of strategic partners including the Decade Collaborative Center on Coastal Resilience, the UN Environment Programme and the Global Ocean Forum, the Partnership contributed to deliver the work plan of this new programme^{15, 16} co-chaired by the secretariats of the IOC/UNESCO and the High-level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy.



The screenshot shows the official website of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO. The header includes the UNESCO logo and the text 'Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission'. The top navigation bar offers links to 'News & Stories', 'Events', 'Subscribe', 'Quick Links', 'English', 'About us', 'Expertise', 'Member States', 'Get Involved', and a search bar. The main content area features a large, bold title 'United Nations Decade Programme for Sustainable Ocean Planning'. Below the title, a subtext reads 'Ocean Decade Programme on Sustainable Ocean Planning (SOP Programme)'. A central image shows a turtle swimming in the ocean, surrounded by various environmental icons (recycling, energy, etc.) and data points. The image is credited to 'Shutterstock - Metaworks 2023'. The URL for the article is <https://www.unico.org/decade-programme-on-sustainable-ocean-planning>.

¹³ [Ocean Matcher | Discover Ocean Funding Opportunities](#)

¹⁴ [Programme on Sustainable Ocean Planning launched at the 2024 UN Ocean Decade Conference | Bluepartnership](#)

¹⁵ [LTOs KPIs web.pdf - Google Drive](#)

¹⁶ [United Nations Decade Programme for Sustainable Ocean Planning | Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission](#)

By fostering a global community of practice on Sustainable Ocean Planning as a whole-of-society and whole-of-government approach to ocean governance driven by science, data and knowledge, the Programme on Sustainable Ocean Planning contributed to the adoption of the IOC-wide strategy on sustainable ocean planning and management (2025-2030)^{17, 18} by Member States at the 32nd General Assembly of the IOC/UNESCO. Building on the strong foundation of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), sustainable ocean planning and management (SOPM) goes further by tackling fragmented governance and connecting sectoral efforts into a coherent, inclusive, and adaptive approach.

4.3 Side event at the 32nd General Assembly of the IOC/UNESCO

The Partnership organised a side-event at the 32nd General Assembly of the IOC/UNESCO together with CoastPredict¹⁹, an Ocean Decade Programme under the Global Ocean Observing System aimed at redefining the science of observing and predicting the Global Coastal Ocean.

Besides building meaningful synergies on the basis of joint priorities to enhance coastal resilience and ocean observation, this joint event promoted the Ocean Decade as a global collaborative framework for ocean knowledge, including with the Ocean Decade Programme on Sustainable Ocean Planning and the Decade Collaborative Center on Coastal Resilience.



¹⁷ [IOC Launches Five-Year Global Strategy to Achieve 100% Sustainable Ocean Management by 2030 | Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission](#)

¹⁸ [IOC Sustainable Ocean Planning and Management | Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission](#)

¹⁹ [coastpredict.org - Home](http://coastpredict.org)

4.4 Decade Collaborative Center “Ocean Economy”

Finally, the Partnership has also engaged with the Decade Collaborative Center “Ocean Economy”, which has announced by the IOC/UNESCO Secretariat at the kickoff of the Partnership’s first co-funded projects in Madrid (September 2024) and launched at the occasion of the UN Ocean Conference in Nice. Under the lead of the Barcelona City Council, this new Decade Collaborative Center focuses on the Ocean Decade Challenge 4 “Developing a sustainable, resilient, and equitable ocean economy” and aims to enhance global coordination, innovation, and impact. A first bilateral exchange took place in December 2025 between the Partnership and Rafaelle Macini, the newly appointed CEO of the Decade Collaborative Center, ahead of his participation at the Partnership’s Symposium 2026.

5.0 EU ALIGNMENT ON OCEAN OBSERVATION AT G7 FSOI LEVEL

Through its role as a pathfinder group at global level, the Future of the Seas and Ocean Initiative of the Group of the Seven (G7 FSOI) is a key initiative to enhance global collaboration for ocean observing and sharing of data and information required for ocean health, weather and climate forecasting, and the development of a sustainable blue economy. Traditionally representing more than half of ocean observation funding worldwide through Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and the European Union, the G7 FSOI working group meets annually to review common priorities and emerging issues, and to identify how the combined national actions of the G7 can advance global ambitions.



Following outreach activities during the first phase, the Partnership was officially invited at the annual working group meeting of the G7 FSOI in Rome (October 2024) to introduce work on the two main joint priorities in support of sustained global ocean observation for an evidence-based management of ocean resources: digital twins of the ocean, and the integration and harmonization of research infrastructures.

In addition to this high-level presentation, a collaborative framework was initiated with a G7 FSOI meeting of national focal points at EU level together with the Partnership. Since October 2024, biannual meetings have fostered strategic alignment on joint priorities and supported the EU leadership on ocean action at global level.

Finally, this cooperative framework contributed to raising awareness on the urgent need to structure the European Ocean Observing System in the light of current disruption risks to the global ocean observing system. Following the presentation of Pierre-Yves Le Traon as G7 FSOI French National Focal Point at the Partnership's Steering Committee meeting (June 2025), the policy brief on the Argo Programme drafted by G7 FSOI Member States was disseminated to the Partnership's national ministries and executive agencies for strategic support.

6.0 MOBILISATION OF OECD EXPERTISE FOR A SUSTAINABLE OCEAN

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) plays a key role for the Partnership's co-design by providing economic evidence for decision-making and supporting the alignment of priorities with the global policy agenda.

During the first cycle of the Partnership, the Brussels Office engaged with an official meeting at the headquarters in Paris and a range of bilateral exchanges and interventions at OECD workshops. Building on these established liaising channels, the Partnership has leveraged the OECD expertise during the second cycle by regularly informing on the OECD analysis, for instance at Partnership's Executive Committee and General Assembly meetings, and promoting mutual engagement at relevant events, such as the Partnership's event at the UN Ocean Conference.

From its Ocean Economy Monitor with a growing economic database, to its emphasis on the role of science and technologies to achieve a sustainable ocean economy, and on the need for sustained ocean observing systems, the OECD work on a sustainable ocean^{20, 21} continues to feed into the Partnership's strategic co-design with key policy advice.



The Ocean Economy to 2050



²⁰ [Ocean | OECD](#)

²¹ [2022-OECD-work-in-support-of-a-sustainable-ocean.pdf](#)

Following its landmark report "The Ocean Economy in 2030", the OECD published the new foresight report "The Ocean Economy to 2050"²² (March 2025). By exploring potential pathways for the sector's development in the next twenty-five years, the OECD provides valuable insight with four main strategic priorities for policy-making to unlock the full potential of a productive and environmentally sustainable ocean economy:

- ✓ **Strengthening ocean governance and regulatory frameworks;**
- ✓ **Promoting technological innovation and digital transformation;**
- ✓ **Enhancing ocean observation data collection and scientific research;**
- ✓ **Expanding developing countries' participation in the ocean economy while safeguarding against environmental harms.**

7.0 ALIGNMENT WITH REGIONAL SEA BASIN ORGANISATIONS

Finally, in alignment with the "think globally, act locally" approach of the Partnership to enhance communities across the Atlantic Ocean and the Baltic, Black, Mediterranean and North Sea Basins, the Brussels Office contributed to deepen the understanding of regional contexts by engaging international experts and representatives of regional sea basins organizations at the Partnership's events and regional workshops (e.g. HELCOM on the Baltic Sea Action Plan at the Baltic Workshop, the Greater North Sea Basin Initiative at the North Sea Workshop, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and the Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPRM) Balkan & Black Sea Commission at the Black Sea Workshop).



²² [The Ocean Economy to 2050 | OECD](#)

8.0 NEXT STEPS

The work of the Brussels Office to insert the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership in the global dimension of the ocean will be continued. Beyond engagement with the Ocean Decade Corporate Data Group in support of the task 8.5, and initiated collaboration with the Decade Collaborative Center “Ocean Economy”, the fit-for-purpose approach will be further enhanced in light of upcoming key global events promoting sustainable ocean economies, including the next OurOcean Conference and the Decade Conference 2027.

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